

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, July 23, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Miss Mabel Hubbard to Mr. Alexander Graham Bell. Nantucket, Sconset, Sunday, July 23, 1876. My dear Alec:

I have only just five minutes ago sent off a letter to you, yet here I am beginning another. Did you ever hear of such goings on- I am so ashamed I carefully guard the heading from everyone, and shall not send this until tomorrow afternoon. I can't help beginning this so interested am I in a little episode I have just witnessed. You will never guess what it was, a contest between a fly and a spider! I never saw one before. Both spider and fly were huge monster, and just of the same size. The fly was caught in the web, and was struggling frantically, the spider watched him, and at last crawled cautiously near it's intended victim. Then there was a fearful struggle and the spider got it's claws on the fly, for a moment and then crept back. He thought there was no use rescuing the fly as he must have been stung but he fought on sometimes lying as if utterly exhausted and then renewing his efforts. The spider seemed to get anxious and came back, another fight, and the spider again crept off, without having touched the fly. This time he did not go back at once but walked around the fly as if strengthening the net that hammed in the prisoner. Then back as if satisfied went Mr. Spider, and staid calmly watching the vain struggles. Alas for his hopes of a good dinner, down on his prey came a duster and the fly was flying far out of his reach. We watched the spider, who set or stood (?) still for a moment and then composedly turned, and began his dinner, on another fly, long since dead. I felt quite sorry for him when Carrie came and put an end to his dinner and life. I have read of such things in books but never saw one and was very much interested and couldn't help telling you about it.

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Monday, Mrs. Lander called last night, and I only hope she liked us as well as we liked her. Do you know, I think she did more than anyone else has been able to do, to make Cousin Mary like you. She was nice in the first place herself and then she spoke so warmly of your father and Mother and brothers, telling us amusing stories of them and altogether thinking so much of them, that she interested Cousin Mary, and after she had gone Cousin Mary asked me a great many questions about you all, more than she has ever done before.

I was only rather mortified Mrs. Lander did not understand me better, it was mostly my fault, I did not try as hard as I should. She asked us to go and see her again and Cousin Mary thinks she would like to go very much. She said Mrs. Lander spoke so beautifully she could have listened to her forever. Bathing today was splendid the waves very low, so we could get beyond them easily into smooth water, and swim.

Carrie and I get along unusually well now, partly I think because I don't interfere with her as much as I did. She and I walked out yesterday and I found myself talking away about somebody who is not here. Suppose she thought it a nuisance, but she looked very much interested. I was telling her how different people scolded me, and of course had to come on you first, and say that you never did, but instead just looked rather grave, and thereby frightened me half out of my wits! Didn't she stare! —

I wonder if I shall hear from you tonight. Hardly expect to though.

You really must excuse my long letters. I have not been able to shorten my information into two words yet, Nor do I think you have!

Please give my love to your father and Mother, Lovingly, Yours, Mabel. Have you seen George Brown yet or heard from Papa or Mr. Pollock about your specifications?